

Fundamentals of Literacy Instruction and Assessment, 6–12

edited by

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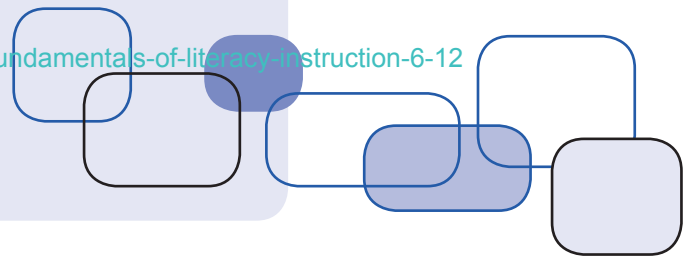
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Teaching Adolescent English Language Learners

Desirée Pallais

Classroom Scenario

Mrs. Peterson is wondering how to help the English learners in her seventh-grade classroom learn from nonfiction passages. Recently, to learn to compare and contrast, she had students read an article that discussed similarities and differences between life in the city and life in the countryside. She started the lesson with a brief discussion on the topic. Then she asked students to take turns reading the article. She stopped after each paragraph for students to summarize and ask questions. None of her English language learners (ELLs) participated. For homework, students were asked to read the article again, answer two questions, and share their answers in class. Three ELL students displayed very different levels of skill on this assignment. Tran, a recent immigrant, wrote answers that were short and hard to understand. Manuel, born in the United States and classified as an ELL since first grade, produced lengthy responses consisting of his opinions, citing little information from the article. Ana, who recently passed an English as a second language (ESL) exit exam, copied exact phrases from the text in her writing. None of the students demonstrated the literacy skills Mrs. Peterson was expecting. How can Mrs. Peterson help these students so that they can master the required skills?

Many children in secondary classrooms, including native English speakers, experience a decline in reading performance after fourth grade. English language learners (ELLs), even

Objectives: After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Understand the developmental process of second-language proficiency and the crucial role of academic language.
2. Describe language-based challenges and research-based approaches for English language learners (ELLs) in the disciplines.
3. Analyze the challenges for ELLs inherent in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
4. Select and apply instructional supports for ELLs that address specific language components.
5. Design, implement, assess, and reflect on a lesson for ELLs targeting specific language needs and integrating the features of effective instruction.

when they are considered English proficient, tend to show even lower scores on standardized tests, and the achievement gaps between students of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds remain significant.¹ There are many reasons why ELLs struggle to learn English. For some students like Tran, short or inadequate responses to basic questions may suggest a temporary problem of learning a new language. On the other hand, Manuel seems stuck in a permanent and frustrating state of trying to acquire English and not succeeding, resulting in a devastating impact on his motivation. These “long-term” ELLs are becoming an increasing focus of research and instructional concern.² The problems that confront students like Ana are not so obvious. These students may no longer be designated as ELLs, but the quality of their schoolwork and their grades are not acceptable. This lack of academic English portends future challenges to their success in higher education and related professional opportunities.

Second-language learners are now expected to reach higher levels of academic achievement than in the past. Most states have rigorous standards for all secondary students to better prepare them for college and careers.³ All ELLs, regardless of their levels of English proficiency, are accountable for the same end-of-year goals. Thus your instruction of ELLs needs to address second-language development and demanding content requirements. In previous chapters, you learned techniques to help all students learn, including ELLs. This chapter focuses on additional ideas and tools designed to support ELLs when confronted with complex text and concepts.

STAGES OF SECOND-LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Acquiring a second language involves developing skills in listening, reading, speaking, and writing. ELLs move through a continuum as they develop English knowledge and skills in these four domains of language. Whereas there are some predictable characteristics of each stage of the continuum, ELLs’ second-language acquisition trajectories vary depending on many factors, such as previous language and school experiences, amount of English exposure, and motivation.⁴

In the first stages of second-language acquisition, ELLs acquire a *receptive vocabulary* based on **high-frequency words** and routine expressions. They comprehend only a few phrases, usually needing visual or graphic support. They tend to remain silent in social interactions, understanding only a few isolated words. When they begin to use keywords and a few short phrases, they enter the *speech emergence stage*.⁵

At the *intermediate fluency stage*, students participate more in conversations. They learn to use colloquial expressions, the correct order of words in a sentence, and grammar, including, for example, the difference between the past progressive “I was doing my homework” and the simple past tense “I did my homework.” Reading tends to be slow, limited to fragments of text containing concrete vocabulary and simple sentences.

During the *advanced intermediate stages*, ELLs usually acquire a specialized vocabulary and enough knowledge of English to communicate effectively in social situations. However, when reading, the students prefer familiar topics, and they struggle doing school tasks independently. Some ELLs, like Manuel in the vignette, stay at the intermediate stage for long periods, struggling with language concepts and vocabulary gaps, especially if they had interrupted schooling or lacked targeted instructional supports.

In the *advanced* levels of the second-language acquisition process, ELLs demonstrate sufficient knowledge of everyday words and phrases and a good repertoire of common language structures. They may display strong basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), social conversational skills supported by nonverbal cues, concrete references, and shared experiences.⁶

However, language proficiency for social interactions is insufficient to learn from subject area text; the latter requires acquiring formal academic language, referred to as cognitive academic language skills (CALP).⁷ CALP involves knowing specialized vocabulary, abstract concepts, and language structures common in complex text. Second-language learners who have sufficient opportunities to develop academic language have deep knowledge of subject area

words within a discipline; they can manipulate language forms with fluency and communicate ideas with precision. For example, students easily select the conditional tense to construct an argument in science, as in “If your hypothesis had been true, we wouldn’t have obtained these unexpected results.” They have a strong command of the functional language to ask specific questions using complex phrases such as “What would happen if we tried the experiment with more accurate measures?” When reading, they grasp complex ideas with ease, such as when sentences begin with subordinate conjunctions (e.g., “Because the sum of the two angles must equal 180, we can figure out the unknown angle”) or when complex phrases contain a relative pronoun (e.g., “An exothermic reaction, which releases energy in the form of heat, has many practical applications”).⁸ They quickly recognize the organizational pattern in a passage suggested by cohesive words such as *notwithstanding*, *nevertheless*, or *additionally*. In writing, they adeptly apply their knowledge of genres to produce a lab report, a book summary, or an essay, addressing the objectives of the specific task.

In sharp contrast to how social English skills are acquired, academic language is learned in school environments as a result of meaningful interaction with complex text.⁹

Second-Language Challenges of Learning in the Disciplines

Underdeveloped Academic Vocabulary Knowledge

Due to underdeveloped academic vocabulary knowledge and lack of English language skills, ELLs face specific challenges during academic discussions and when trying to construct meaning from subject area text.

For adequate listening and reading comprehension, 9 out of 10 words need to be known.¹⁰ However, ELLs tend to show large vocabulary gaps compared to their English-only peers.¹¹ A smaller vocabulary size hinders both oral and written comprehension. During classroom discussions, ELLs may struggle more with frequently used words than native English students. In addition, due to insufficient depth of vocabulary knowledge, many ELLs struggle with words that have multiple meanings, such as *square*, *right*, and *angle* in math or *energy*, *field*, and *space* in science. For the same reason, figurative phrases like *shed light on the subject*, *boils down to*, or *the crux of the matter is* can be problematic. Underdeveloped oral language and vocabulary may lead to word-by-word interpretation of expressions like *least common multiple*, *multiply by*, *look up*, *cut it out*, *clear off*, or *build on*. In all these situations, vocabulary weaknesses can lead to comprehension challenges.

When learning from subject area text, ELLs, like their native-English peers, have to comprehend novel, academic words used in unfamiliar ways. For example, in the phrase “Nitrogen deposition affects nutrient dynamics and soil respiration,” the verb *deposit*, a difficult concept for many students, is converted in this academic sentence to a noun, *deposition*.¹² The nominalization (changing a verb to a noun) of abstract terms used in disciplinary writing is especially challenging for ELLs who are learning complex content in a language they are also learning.

NATIVE LANGUAGE INTERFERENCES

Some ELLs, especially at the intermediate stages of English proficiency, struggle with grammar conventions in English. It is important for teachers to understand these differences so that they can explicitly teach students how English differs from their native language. Table 15.1 suggests some areas that pose language challenges for speakers of Chinese and Spanish: irregular verbs, subject-verb agreement, noun/adjective conventions, and articles. Spanish-speaking ELLs have a potential advantage because of a shared alphabetic system with English. Still, there are some

Table 15.1. Syntax differences among English, Spanish, and Chinese

Area of language	Syntax difference	Sample language constructions
Verbs	In Chinese, the adverb, not the verb, is used to mark time. English has more classes of irregular verbs than Spanish.	I do the experiment yesterday. I go yesterday.
Subject-verb agreement	In Chinese, verbs do not change form for this kind of agreement. It may be hard to remember that there is less variation in English than in Spanish.	He see me. She go there.
Plural	In Chinese, the noun does not change to indicate the plural.	They give me 3 dollar.
Articles	Rules for definite and indefinite articles are different.	I don't know correct time. I am going to the school.

Source: Soto-Hinman and Hetzel (2009).

differences. For example, in English there are more irregular verbs, and the verbs are less conjugated than in Spanish. Sometimes in English, an *s* is attached at the end of a verb—as in “he reads”—to indicate it is the third person singular doing the action (whereas for I, you, we, or they, the word is conjugated as “read”). In Spanish, it is much more common to attach endings to verbs to indicate who is doing the action. In the verb *to read*, for example, the verb is conjugated for every person: *yo leo, tú lees, el lee, nosotros leemos, ustedes leen, ellos leen*. In addition, Spanish has a more flexible word order than English. In an English sentence, the subject usually goes before the verb. In a Spanish sentence, the subject can just as often go after the verb.¹³ Syntax differences pose more challenges for speakers of nonalphabetic languages. For example, in Mandarin Chinese, adverbs, rather than verbs, are markers for the timing of an action. Word order conventions also are different in Chinese. For example, it would be acceptable to say or to write, “We to lunch went after school.”¹⁴ As a result, it may be particularly challenging for many speakers of this language to assimilate English tenses.

Language Expectations for English Language Learners in the Common Core State Standards

The CCSS suggest a new approach to the language development of ELLs, expecting growth in English proficiency to be a part of academic learning. Teachers need to know how to design lessons in their content area to foster language acquisition. Effective teaching of ELLs involves analyzing the language skills required of lesson tasks and objectives in the context of specific disciplinary settings. Let us discuss three types of language requirements for ELLs in the Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 6–12, the Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) 6–12, and the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading.

- *Receptive language skills:* Ten cross-disciplinary standards in the Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 6–12 reflect a concern to acquire a common set of reading skills across all subjects for all secondary students, including ELLs. These 10 standards address 4 areas: gathering key ideas from text, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, and text complexity. To meet the expectations in these 10 standards, ELLs need to acquire new receptive language skills in vocabulary, syntax, and discourse patterns. Receptive language skills are also involved in the ELA standards, which address learning conventions, grammar, general and domain-specific vocabulary, and spelling.
- *Productive language skills:* The CCSS promotes interaction and collaboration skills. The ELA Speaking and Listening Standards expect students to engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, follow rules, pose questions, respond, and delineate the arguments of

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other speakers. Moreover, these standards require students to demonstrate understandings via presentations of claims and findings, including the adaptation of speech to a variety of contexts. Many ELLs will need practice using concept words, complex phrases, functional vocabulary, and academic expressions within the context of the disciplines. The productive language skills taught must include an applied knowledge of the **pragmatics** of communication and conversation, which involves knowing how to talk in various situations and with different people. For example, students may use informal slang when talking with peers in the hallways, but they should use formal English when giving classroom presentations.

- *Language for higher-level thinking*: The CCSS outline an explicit commitment to academic rigor and higher order thinking activities for all students, including, of course, ELLs. For example, the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading expect students to analyze how and why individual ideas and events develop and interact, interpret words, analyze text, assess points of view, integrate and evaluate content, delineate and evaluate arguments, and compare approaches, among other expectations. To demonstrate these advanced academic abilities, ELLs need to develop sophisticated thinking skills and familiarity with the advanced features of academic language.

PREPARING LESSONS WITH SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The more rigorous expectations of the CCSS require dedicated attention to instructional supports for all students. In this section, we discuss essential considerations for ELLs when preparing lessons to address the CCSS: teaching vocabulary, language constructs and functions, and how to engage in academic discussions.

TEACHING VOCABULARY

Make Vocabulary Teaching a Priority with English Language Learners

First, carefully select words to teach explicitly. In previous chapters, you learned vocabulary techniques to teach subject-specific Tier 3 words like *mitosis* in science, *hypotenuse* in math, *emancipation* in social science, and *metaphor* in language arts. In order to advance in language skills, ELLs need to also learn many “mortar” words—terms used frequently in all content areas to connect ideas. For example, you may consider teaching the following mortar words used in many contexts: *analyze*, *pattern*, *parameter*, or *characteristic*.

Teachers should teach and model Tier 2 words to help ELLs develop academic language, using *emerging* instead of *coming out* or *elaborate* instead of *tell me more*.¹⁵ In addition, teachers need to determine if there are any Tier 1 words—usually not a concern with native English speakers—that should be taught to ELLs. Consider idioms and everyday expressions that may be unfamiliar to these students. At times, teaching these words can be very basic, such as highlighting the different meanings of simple homophones (*to* and *two*) or presenting a label for a familiar concept. In other cases, you may find that before reading a passage, ELL students need explicit instruction of idiomatic expressions such as *give me a break*, *boils down to*, or *the crux of the matter is*. Refer to Table 15.2 for some considerations when selecting words to teach ELL students.¹⁶

A second aspect to consider when teaching vocabulary to ELLs is how to present the new meanings. As discussed in previous chapters, students learn vocabulary best if you follow these guidelines:

1. Provide a student-friendly definition.
2. Use nonlinguistic supports—a visual or a graphic—to illustrate a word’s definition.
3. Highlight common Latin or Greek origins. Many ELLs can transfer knowledge for cognate words consisting of Latin or Greek word parts from high-frequency vocabulary in their

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Table 15.2. Considerations when selecting words for English language learners

Tier 3	Many cognates need conceptual understanding: isotope/isotope False cognates: assist someone/atender a alguien
Tier 2	Examples of academic connectors: however, on the other hand Words that convey precision: emerge (versus come out) Polysemous words: trunk Cognates: fortunate/afortunado
Tier 1	False cognates: rope/ropa Some homophones: weather/whether Simple idioms: Make up your mind. Some basic words: staple, bug

Source: Calderón (2007).

native language, especially in Spanish.¹⁷ For example, the word *interact* corresponds to the Spanish term *interactuar*. In this case, teach students that the prefix *inter* means *between* and that the root *act* means *to do* in order to help them understand the word *interact*.

4. Share two kinds of sentences, one that will help students relate the new meaning to the text and another one that is relevant to their experiences.¹⁸ For example, when teaching the word *compromise*, you could use the following sentences: *To settle the border conflict, Mexico and Texas reached a compromise*, and *We negotiated a compromise with the seller to buy the car at a lower price.*¹⁹
5. Involve students in a dialogue about the new vocabulary before, during, and after reading. Before reading, encourage students to examine pictures, graphics, and bold print and to share predictions about the text. During reading, provide opportunities for students to notice new words in the context of the passage, to interact among one another using the new meanings, and to discuss their prior knowledge of the word. After reading, have students use graphic organizers to internalize new meanings. Promote deep-processing activities, where students generate sentences with the new words, using word diagrams, cloze exercises, and/or word walls.
6. Incorporate the background experiences and personal viewpoints of your students. Word generation researchers have demonstrated increased achievement and motivation when incorporating topics relevant to the students into vocabulary building experiences.²⁰
7. Create short passages that are controversial and of interest to your students, using the targeted words. Teach these words in the context of the passage. To assess the students' mastery of the new vocabulary, write a passage leaving blanks and have the students insert the correct vocabulary words.

Teach Language Constructions in Academic Text

Explicitly teaching the language forms behind sophisticated sentences can help ELLs (see Table 15.3).²¹ For example, ELLs benefit when teachers model, emphasize, and point out the adjectives in the phrase: *Volume is three dimensional, but surface area is two dimensional*. As you prepare to use a textbook passage, notice if there are long noun phrases, complex sentences, or other advanced constructions that may pose challenges. For long noun phrases, give students opportunities to expand terms incrementally.²² For an art history class, an example could be *Mannerism, High-Renaissance Mannerism, the eccentric sculptures in High-Renaissance Mannerism*, and *the distorted and eccentric sculptures in High-Renaissance Mannerism*. To promote awareness of syntactical relations and of academic constructions, divide a challenging sentence into smaller fragments and have students reconstruct it.

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Table 15.3. Sample academic expressions in the different disciplines

Disciplinary aspect	Academic expression
Math: problem solving	Let's break it down into parts. First _____.
Language arts: persuading	The advantages of _____ outweigh the disadvantages of _____.
History: perspective taking	One way to interpret this event is _____.
Science: generating a hypothesis	I hypothesize that _____ because _____.

Source: Zwiers (2008).

TEACH LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

When teaching ELLs, consider the language involved in classroom procedures and academic tasks, such as *describing*, *comparing*, or *hypothesizing*.²³ Experts recommend direct teaching of the language associated with these language functions to ELLs. Teachers need to explain the process, model the academic language involved, provide guided practice, and provide opportunities for students to practice using the terms.

Promote Academic Discussions

Several chapters in this book discuss the benefit of peer discussions for all students, including ELLs. With ELLs, interacting with other students as part of learning is an essential consideration. Social settings can create a bridge between ELLs' prior concepts and new learning.²⁴ To encourage participation by ELLs, insert pauses for language practice at all stages of a lesson. Allow ELLs to use language to activate prior knowledge, react to new information, process and discuss concepts, give and get feedback, and synthesize ideas. Provide ample oral language opportunities before reading activities and before asking ELLs to demonstrate new learning. "Think, pair, share" can be used during whole-class discussions.²⁵ Class-wide peer tutoring—students working in pairs—promotes engagement and meaningful learning with ELLs.²⁶ Refer to Table 15.4 for other examples of peer-based discussion techniques from ESL contexts to support the development of fluency with academic terms and to promote thinking in meaningful contexts.²⁷

ELLs need to use sophisticated language to develop the "thinking skills" within each discipline to reflect a particular way "of viewing the world."²⁸ Therefore, it is important to carefully design peer discussions that stimulate the use of advanced language for the deep processing of ideas rather than for superficial engagement with procedures or for quick verbal exchanges. Scaffold language use for sophisticated thinking skills by providing pre-elaborated phrases for the beginning part of responses. Language starters specific to each discipline can help you maintain a high level of cognitive rigor with ELLs, promote disciplinary thinking, and approximate the expectations outlined in the CCSS. Some examples are provided in Table 15.4.²⁹ Discuss and post these academic language starters before organizing peer or group activities and expecting responses from ELLs.

Instructional accommodations for students who are in the early stages of acquiring English proficiency need to be carefully implemented because the students may not benefit from teaching efforts that focus solely on building comprehension.³⁰ These students need linguistic accommodations in the four areas of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Linguistic accommodations provide supports to ELLs based on English proficiency levels to enable them to access grade-level content without reducing the rigor of lesson expectations. Refer to Table 15.5 for examples of some instructional supports for beginner, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high ELLs.³¹

An example of an instructional accommodation for listening with students in the early stages of English proficiency is the cloze dictation task. After discussing new vocabulary, dictate

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Table 15.4. Peer-based techniques that can help English language learners develop fluency with academic language

	Description
Think, pair, share	Form student pairs that respond to questions or prompts as part of quick activities. They practice new language skills before whole-class discussions.
Class-wide peer tutoring	Divide the class in two groups: ELLs and non-ELLs. Rank each group based on English proficiency for the ELLs and on classroom performance for the non-ELLs. Form pairs from similar levels in the rankings, and use these pairs for peer discussions.
Jigsaw groups	Form expert groups where students at similar levels of English proficiency research a given topic. Each member then goes to a base group, where they share knowledge.
Buddy read	Form pairs to work together when reading text. One partner reads out loud, and the other one listens; then they take notes. They stop at designated points in a passage to create a graphic organizer. Roles may be reversed.
Conversation circles	Form two circles, one inside the other, and have students discuss with the partner in front. The circle inside rotates, providing many opportunities to listen and to use language as they process new content.
Interview grids	Students move around the whole class talking to other students and taking notes. With the information acquired, they fill out an interview grid.

Sources: Archer and Hughes (2011); Herrell and Jordan (2012); Vaughn et al. (2009); Walqui and van Lier (2010).

Note: ELL, English language learners.

two or three paragraphs containing the new vocabulary. All students write what you dictate; in this way, the content is kept the same for all students. Native speakers write on blank paper, while ELL students get specific linguistic supports. Students at an intermediate level of English proficiency and at lower levels get the same passage but with some target words and/or sentences removed, or they may get a copy of the passage with blanks only for the new vocabulary words (the rest of the words in the paragraph are provided). This listening/writing activity will promote the content and language acquisition of your ELLs.³²

Accommodations for early ELLs in reading include environmental print, labels, and signs. Consider preparing different versions of the same text, dividing a passage into chunks, and providing additional time to process the language. Use a chart or a graphic organizer to reinforce the vocabulary and the organization of ideas in the text.

To scaffold the oral or written responses of students who are still acquiring English, vary the language complexity you expect in responses, depending on their language levels.³³ For example, students in the beginning levels may respond by thumbs up/thumbs down, yes/no formats, single-word responses, or labeling components in a picture. For students in the intermediate levels, prepare simple sentence frames; for advanced students, allow them to use more sophisticated language frames. To scaffold writing at the end of lessons, select a paragraph of four to six sentences, write each sentence on a strip of paper, and scramble the sentences. Direct the students to place the sentences in order to create a coherent paragraph.

SHELTERED INSTRUCTION

Sheltered instruction approaches match English proficiency levels with instructional supports for ELLs to make content comprehensible while students develop language skills. The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) offers a framework to guide instruction.³⁴

Sheltered instruction approaches consider the role of background knowledge, the use of familiar material, and the incorporation of students' experiences in classroom discussions. SIOP strategies make tasks very clear via the use of explicit instructional procedures. Other supports associated with sheltered instruction techniques include the use of graphic organizers, pictures, real objects, demonstrations, and hands-on experiences in order to offer redundant information that facilitates learning for ELLs. Sheltered instruction strategies include techniques for

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Table 15.5. Suggested teacher behaviors to accommodate instruction to English language learners' different proficiency levels

Level of English Proficiency	Suggested accommodations
Advanced and Advanced High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-teach academic vocabulary and abstract concepts Explain the use of idiomatic expressions in several contexts Discuss examples of sophisticated language use in texts Provide multiple opportunities for peer-based discussions using academic language Organize oral presentations where students practice new language features
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before reading text, pre-teach key vocabulary terms During discussions, rephrase ideas using newly-learned words Allow processing time for students to think and generate responses Provide answer choices as options for students to use Expand on students' responses using more sophisticated language Offer sentence frames that scaffold the use of new language structures Organize writing activities that make students reflect on new language features
Beginner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use gestures and visual supports whenever possible Use short sentences, speak slowly, and rephrase during explanations Model pronunciation and intonation during reading activities Use texts with familiar vocabulary Allow native language use when appropriate Display sample sentences illustrating specific language features Create word walls and require students to use them during class activities

Source: Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk (2013)

language development and encourage teachers to establish language objectives as well as content objectives for each lesson, to use sentence frames to scaffold academic oral language, and to promote peer discussions to provide ample language practice.

In conclusion, when preparing lessons for ELLs, consider the following ideas:

- ELLs benefit from explicit teaching of the language features involved in academic tasks.
- Vocabulary teaching should be a priority; it is important to carefully select Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 words for ELLs.
- In order to learn from complex text, ELLs need to understand sentence constructions and language functions.
- Inserting pauses at multiple points in lessons allows time for ELLs to process the language.
- Language starters and protocols to guide academic thinking during discussions can promote disciplinary thinking.
- Design linguistic accommodations for listening, speaking, reading, and writing tasks for students who are in the lower levels of English proficiency.

A SAMPLE LESSON WITH SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE LEARNERS

This section refers to Table 15.6 and illustrates the application of specific ELL supports to a seventh-grade lesson in English language arts. The overall framework of the lesson and the teacher scripts reflect ideas discussed by Hollingsworth and Ibarra when crafting explicit instruction lessons.³⁵

Mrs. Peterson is preparing a language arts lesson on text structure. As a first step in her lesson preparation, she analyzes the following curriculum standards for seventh grade:

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- Common Core State Standard 5 for ELA: “Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.”
- Texas College & Career Readiness Standards, Cross-Disciplinary Standard 7: “Adapt reading strategies according to structure of texts.”

She establishes content and language goals for her lesson. The content goal is this: *Students will learn to identify text structure.* To support ELL students, she also has a language objective: *to understand and use mortar words, connecting terms that are used to compare text structure.*

She wants her ELL students to understand the following terms and how they are used in sentences that use comparison text structures: *similarly, likewise, as well as, in the same way, both, however, on the other hand, whereas, despite, and nevertheless.*

The following are scripts and descriptions of her lesson implementation, corresponding to steps 3–10 in Table 15.6.

Presenting the Learning Objectives “Today we will identify the comparison text structure in informational text. Write down the learning objective for today’s lesson. Check your neighbor to make sure he or she is writing it down exactly as I am showing it on the projector. Today, we will identify the comparison text structure in informational texts.”

Activating Prior Knowledge “In the last lesson, we examined how the organization of ideas in a text can help us remember information, and we learned how to identify some key words that can help us identify sequential texts. Your knowledge of how clue words give hints of text structure will help you in today’s lesson. Tell your neighbor how you think knowledge of the comparison text structure can be useful to you in school. Write down at least two clue words that can help you identify sequential text structure. Share your clue word with your neighbor, and be ready to share with the class. You have 2 minutes.”

Engaging Learners During Explicit Instruction and Modeling “Let’s read this sentence together: A comparison text structure organizes information by comparing and contrasting two items or ideas.” The teacher uncovers the next section from the projector, containing two overlapping circles. “When you compare two ideas, you can put them next to each other in your head and inspect what they have in common and what they don’t have in common.” The teacher points at the section where they overlap and where they do not overlap and makes gestures to demonstrate how you can compare two ideas. “A comparison text structure often contains clue words such as *similarly, likewise, as well as, in the same way, both, however, on the other hand, whereas, despite, and nevertheless.* Now, please whisper to your neighbor how a comparison text structure organizes information and mention two clue words that can be used.” A few ESL students are provided oral language stems adapted to their English proficiency and a list of clue words with native language translations to remember meanings to use when sharing. The teacher has posted other language frames on the wall for all students:

A comparison text structure organizes information by _____.

Two clue words that can be used in a comparison text structure are _____ and _____.

To identify a comparison text structure, you _____ and _____.

I would use the comparison text structure to _____.

I found these three clue words: _____, _____, and _____.

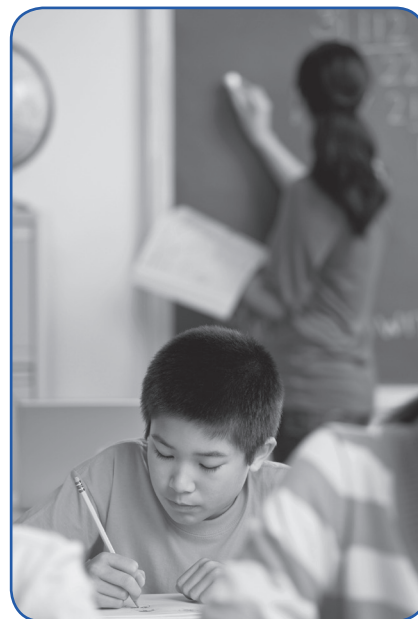


Table 15.6. Example of a lesson integrating supports for English language learners

Step 1: Identify curriculum standards.	
Step 2: Select content and language objectives.	Determine language objectives.
Step 3: Present the learning objectives.	Have students read and write grade-level text.
Step 4: Activate prior knowledge.	Have students use language for listening and speaking as they share with peers. Students write as they activate prior knowledge.
Step 5: Engage learners during explicit instruction and modeling.	Give choral reading of text. Demonstrate using a graphic organizer. Use gestures to make content accessible. Elaborate. Allow peer interaction. Give language models for asking and answering questions. Provide step-by-step procedures. Provide opportunities to practice academic oral language.
Step 6: Provide support during guided practice.	Scaffold support as needed. Apply with a variety of examples.
Step 7: Monitor during unprompted practice.	Monitor and provide corrective feedback.
Step 8: Check for understanding during lesson review.	Check for understanding. Identify those who need additional help.
Step 9: Provide structured independent practice and in-class intervention.	Contextualize vocabulary learning. Align in-class intervention with tutoring activities.
Step 10: Assessing and monitoring learning.	Monitor and continue support to struggling students who need more scaffolds.

“Now we are going to learn two steps you can use to identify a comparison text structure:

1. Look for comparison clue words in the text.
2. Confirm that ideas are being compared.”

The teacher provides an example and a nonexample and models the application of those steps with both.

“Ask your neighbor, ‘What are two steps you can use to identify a comparison text structure?’ Allow them to answer the question and then ask, ‘When could you use the comparison text structure?’”

After 3 minutes, the teacher asks students, “What do I look for in a text to verify if it has a comparison type of structure?”

Providing Support During Guided Practice “Let’s look at some paragraphs from your science and social science textbooks and apply the steps I demonstrated. Circle clue words only if they belong to the comparison text structure.” The teacher uses three different examples of comparison text structures, each with a different set of clue words, and models the steps with the students. The teacher reminds students of a nonexample by applying the steps to a sequential type of text. Students have a graphic organizer and continue to work in pairs, sometimes answering questions from the teacher.

Monitoring During Practice Most students start to apply the steps with teacher guidance and feedback. The teacher provides more support to some students who are in the low intermediate stage of English proficiency. The teacher monitors students and provides corrective feedback to verify that students do not circle any clue words in the nonexample

paragraph, know how to recognize clue words, and only circle clue words in comparison text paragraphs.

Checking for Understanding During Lesson Review “Okay, students. Before I give you time to find examples in your science and social science texts independently, I want to make sure you are comfortable describing what a comparison text structure is, how you identify it, and why it might help you when you are reading.”

The teacher checks for understanding and notices that most students can answer the three questions. Six students, however, need additional support. Two are intermediate students, and the other four are advanced intermediate but low achievers.

Providing Structured Independent Practice and In-Class Intervention The teacher distributes a papers and announces, “Students, you have 15 minutes to determine if the 3 paragraphs on the sheet have a comparison structure, and if they do, circle the clue words. I will be collecting papers in 15 minutes.” She then invites the six students in need of additional support to join her.

The two intermediate ELLs need help understanding the meaning of some clue words: *similarly*, *despite*, *whereas*, and *nevertheless*. The teacher shares their use in a variety of sentences. Students practice matching clue words to sentences. These students complete sentences inserting the right clue word. Finally, they use clue words to construct one sentence using language frames at their level. To motivate the four advanced intermediate students who are low achievers, the teacher asks these four students to choose from partially completed phrases and examples to write a comparison text structure of their choice. She reviews procedures with them and supports them in preparing short presentations.

Assessing and Monitoring Learning As homework, the teacher asks students to select one paragraph using the comparison text structure from their social studies textbook and one from their science textbook and to circle the clue words in each paragraph.

The teacher asks students to prepare to share their findings. Some ELL students are provided language frames:

The comparison text structure I chose relates to the topic of _____.

I chose it because _____.

The clue words I found were _____.

The next day, the teacher evaluates the homework, enters progress monitoring data for all students, and writes additional notes to the ESL specialist regarding two low intermediate students who need additional support.

Notice how students start using language from the very beginning of the lesson as part of structured interactions. Examine the teacher scripts and the ELL supports column in steps 3, 4, and 5 of the lesson example. When being presented with the objectives, students write the lesson objectives in their notebooks, read those of their partners, and inspect each other’s writing. In step 4, to activate prior knowledge, students listen and speak in a pair-share discussion and hypothesize how the comparison text structure might benefit them in school. In step 5, during the explicit instruction component of the lesson, ELL students do choral reading and use language again, this time to paraphrase what they have learned about the comparison text structure.

Mrs. Peterson also prepares differentiated language frames to meet the needs of some of her ELL students. Four ELL students are like Manuel in the introductory vignette. There are also two recent immigrants who are low intermediates and are similar to Tran. Based on the individual needs of these students, Mrs. Peterson prepares additional, differentiated supports. Notice that in step 5, the teacher prepares simple sentence frames for the two low intermediate students and also allows the use of native language. In steps 7 and 9, as part of an in-class short intervention, these students get targeted support. They practice inserting clue words in sentences and using language frames to produce original sentences. The four students that are similar to Manuel

are invited to choose among partially completed phrases and examples as a way of raising their motivation; they are also given extra supports in preparation for a class presentation.

For homework, ELL students are again supported with language frames as they apply and generalize learning while looking for paragraphs in social science and science textbooks that use the comparison text structure. The next day, Mrs. Peterson evaluates the homework and tracks the language and content progress of her ELL students.

ASSESSING PROGRESS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN ACQUIRING ENGLISH AND LEARNING CONTENT

The progress of ELLs needs to be assessed in two areas: acquiring English and mastering the content. Sometimes both can be measured with the same instruments.

You should have a record of the general level of language proficiency for the ELLs in your classroom. All states are required to measure and report annually the growth of ELLs in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Be sure to determine how your district and state assesses ELLs and your role in the assessment process. If you haven't received the results of the annual assessment of your students, request them.

The California State Department of Education created the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM), a holistic rubric that tracks the progress of ELL students in oral academic language use.³⁶ This free tool, available to everyone, consists of a 1–5 rating scale with established criteria in comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.

You may combine analytic rubrics like the SOLOM with content knowledge assessment by inserting standards for a given unit of study. Thus the same rubric can address content and language outcomes. For example, you could use the language standards to monitor students' use of specialized vocabulary in the context of a unit on American history. In this case, add a section listing descriptors at the various levels for the language expectation; add other sections with criteria related to the content. In this way, you may create a standards-based rubric that tracks progress in language and content mastery over several units of study.

Formative assessments, such as the ones discussed earlier, are used regularly to collect information about student progress. The information is used to inform and adapt instruction. Any activity where students present the results of their learning can be a source of formative assessment data. In English language arts, consider vocabulary tests, grammar exercises, journal entries, oral presentations, and essays. In mathematics, inspect students' responses to word problems or written notes of their explanations as they solve problems. In science and social studies, use papers, journal entries, cloze responses, anecdotal records, short quizzes, and homework assignments. Portfolio assessments can also help to document the progress of ELL students in both language and content.

Summative assessments, completed at the end of a unit, semester, or year, may have to be modified for ELLs to obtain an accurate measure of what they know but may not be able to express well in English. It is important to measure content knowledge without the interference of language, especially when assessing ELLs who are at lower levels of English proficiency.

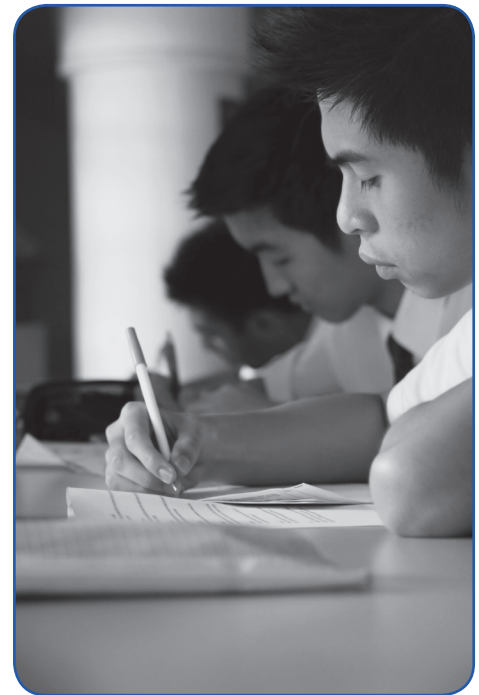


Table 15.7. Sample English language learner supports

If you want your ELL students to . . .	You can do the following	Example
. . . develop self-confidence, self-regulation skills, and independent thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach self-questioning techniques. • Allow students to participate in their own assessments. • Provide opportunities for the independent application of taught strategies. • Design opportunities to demonstrate knowledge. • Allow choice in presentation formats and group membership. 	Students share their background experiences and opinions, make original presentations, and assess their own work.
. . . learn concepts from complex text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate or build prior knowledge. • Use the “I do, we do, you do” routine. • Model the use of graphic organizers to extract meaning and organize ideas from text. • Have students generate why and how questions. • Give students opportunities to process complex information and reformulate ideas. 	After the teacher models procedures, students use cue cards with the question prompts “why” and “how” to generate questions from a text.
. . . advance in academic language proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give sentence stems and sentence starters. • Provide opportunities to obtain language models from peers. • Share discussion cards based on language proficiency. • Preassign roles and give cue cards to students during group discussions. • Give students opportunities to rephrase concepts using new concepts and vocabulary. 	Students use sentence frames that use <i>however</i> , <i>on the other hand</i> , and <i>whereas</i> when comparing characters in a novel.
. . . access content in complex texts in each of the disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach the meanings of specialized vocabulary in the context of the text. • Analyze grammar usage in the subject area and allow students to construct sentences using sentence types. • Adapt comprehension strategies to text features. • Teach text structures explicitly. • Discuss discourse features in a text. 	The teacher hands out a graphic organizer with prompts and models a think-aloud to show students how to extract and organize ideas from a text.
. . . utilize content as part of their explanations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify language only when necessary. • Use visual supports. • Use step-by-step procedures. • Reformulate ideas using different terms and with other modalities. • Contextualize new concepts using videos or graphic organizers. • Teach functional language: how to describe, analyze, compare and contrast, and so forth. 	The teacher changes the term <i>cookie factory</i> to <i>bakery</i> in a math problem.

Note: ELL, English language learners.

Consider providing language accommodations that are aligned to the instructional supports used during learning.³⁷ Include word banks, glossaries, electronic translators, visuals, graphic organizers, or extended time (see also Table 15.7).

Many second-language learners benefit from monitoring their own progress.³⁸ Communicate to your ELLs the criteria for grading and the specific language components that are addressed in a lesson or unit. Clear expectations will guide their self-improvement efforts. Consider involving your ELLs in the design of authentic assessments. Provide opportunities

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for them to participate in identifying evaluation criteria for their work and in contributing to plans to reach higher standards. Give them time to discuss their progress with peers and to rate each other's work using a rubric.

Some experts recommend providing information on both language proficiency and academic achievement on report cards. In this system, the percentage contribution of standards-related learning requirements increases as students move up in the levels of English proficiency.³⁹

SUMMARY

The scenario at the beginning of this chapter described a teacher who needed help supporting ELLs in a seventh-grade classroom. After analyzing the stages of second-language development, the language challenges involved in learning content in the upper grades, instructional techniques, and linguistic accommodations, you now have new ideas to promote content acquisition and language development for ELLs in secondary classrooms. Students who are acquiring foundational English knowledge and skills, in particular, will need specific linguistic accommodations in order to learn in the upper grades. A focus on language in the context of challenging and meaningful activities will contribute to high-quality teaching with ELLs in secondary classrooms.⁴⁰

APPLICATION ACTIVITIES

In-Class Assignments

1. In groups, analyze and sort the following words and expressions into vocabulary Tiers 1, 2, and 3 for ELLs: lecture, exit, isotope, search, read between the lines, constitute, satire, itemize, with bells and whistles, cede, boundary, moreover, assistance, claim, expression, declare, running around, formulate, reservation, and meiosis. Select two words and discuss how you would teach them.
2. Analyze the lesson discussed in this chapter and use it to develop a scoring rubric containing essential features to use when teaching ELLs.
3. With a partner, select a standard from your discipline to teach. Adapt the lesson example provided in this chapter. Discuss and justify the instructional supports you develop.
4. Form expert groups, each to focus on one of the languages represented in the local schools. Investigate two features that make these languages different from English, enumerate the challenges for ELLs who speak those languages, and discuss the instructional supports that would target the differences in a content area class of your choice.
5. Form groups to read and discuss the following article on enhanced social studies lessons developed by CREATE researchers: <http://www.cal.org/create/publications/briefs/effective-social-studies-instruction.html>. Construct charts outlining routines for the following instructional features in the lesson: language objectives, vocabulary, use of video, paired reading, and use of graphic organizers.

Student Assignments (This May or May Not Be Your Tutee)

1. Interview an ELL to obtain information about his or her native language, school experiences, and cultural background. What did you learn about the student that could inform your instruction?
2. Obtain a writing sample from an ELL student in the subject you plan to teach. Examine the word choice, sentence structure, and the organization of ideas. Determine areas of linguistic support for this student.

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3. Design an activity to teach five academic words to a group of ELLs, adapting an example from units provided by Word Generation researchers: <http://aala.serpmedia.org/index.php/topic-and-words>
4. Select a chapter from a middle school textbook in your discipline. Design a lesson with listening, speaking, reading, and writing accommodations to support a beginner and an intermediate ELL. If possible, teach the lesson and reflect on your implementation. Did your students benefit from the linguistic supports? How do you know? What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?
5. Observe instruction in a secondary classroom with ELLs and use the rubric you developed (In-Class Assignment #2) to evaluate the lesson observed.

Homework Assignments

1. Analyze the *Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM)*, available for download at <http://www.cal.org/twi/EvalToolkit/appendix/solom.pdf>.⁴¹ What linguistic accommodations would you provide for a student who scored 3 in comprehension, 3 in fluency, 3 in vocabulary, 4 in pronunciation, and 2 in grammar?
2. Form groups to analyze the unit developed by Aída Walqui, Nanette Koelsch, and Mary Schmida, titled *Persuasion Across Time and Space*, available to download from Stanford University at http://ell.stanford.edu/teaching_resources/ela
Discuss how the instructional techniques used in the unit promote language proficiency while at the same time help ELL meet English language arts standards.
3. Investigate ESL practices in a nearby school. Describe the services provided and how the ESL and classroom teachers work together. Based on what you find, propose how the ESL teacher and the classroom teacher can improve their collaboration to support ELLs.
4. Explore the following web sites and construct a table describing at least one instructional approach from each web site that may help you when teaching ELLs.
 - <http://www.cal.org/create>
 - <http://www.colorincolorado.org/webcasts/assessment>
 - http://ell.stanford.edu/teaching_resources/ela
 - <http://www.wordsift.com/site/about>
 - <http://wg.serpmedia.org/index.html>
 - <http://www.readingrockets.org/research/topic/ell>

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